UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NOTES

RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE receives $40,000, Princeton University $50,000, and Lafayette College $50,000 by the will of Calvin Pardee.

THE building of metallurgy at the Michigan College of Mines, Houghton, Michigan, was destroyed by fire on March 15, with loss estimated between $250,000 and $275,000. Valuable records were lost, including those of the United States Bureau of Mines, occupying offices in the building.

COURSES constituting the first two years of the four-year course in medicine at Rush Medical College are given at the University of Chicago and include work in zoology, anatomy, physiology, physiological chemistry and pharmacology, pathology, hygiene and bacteriology. For the summer quarter the regular faculty in these courses will be supplemented by men from other institutions, including Wade Wright Oliver, professor of bacteriology, Long Island College Hospital; William Barnard Sharp, professor of preventive medicine, University of Texas Medical School; William Alfred Starin, professor of bacteriology, Ohio State University, and Andrew Conway Ivy, assistant professor of physiology, Loyola University.

EUGENE J. RIGHTS, a graduate of Lehigh University who has been engaged in bridge construction, has been appointed professor of civil engineering at the University of Porto Rico.

DR. L. PLASENCIA has been appointed professor of biological chemistry in the University of Havana.

MR. M. B. R. SWANN has been elected to a fellowship at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, and appointed a lecturer in pathology.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

WEATHERWAX ON MAIZE ENDOSPERM[1]

DR. WEATHERWAX has recently contributed a very interesting paper to *Genetics* entitled "A rare carbohydrate in waxy maize." It is written with that inimitable blending of the didactic and the dogmatic which approaches true perfection in all of the author's work.

Two ingenious ideas led to this paper. Presumably there would be no claim that these ideas are absolutely original; but at least they have not been utilized before to the full extent of their possibilities. The investigation consists of observing the color reaction when iodine dissolved in aqueous potassium iodide is applied to the endosperm of a variety of maize. In itself this is not new. It has been done frequently by various botanists, and even by geneticists. The novel idea, the idea which might be termed ingenious without misrepresentation, is to make a complete and well-rounded investigation out of this one experiment. The second adroit idea is to omit all the vulgar details of this test in order that there may be no hindrance, obstruction or inhibition which might prevent the fullest freedom in drawing the most general conclusions. This again has its prototype. Sir Isaac Newton is said to have made a single experiment with falling bodies, utilizing the apple as material; yet the plan, the scope, and the mode of carrying on his observation are unmentioned in the two great works to which it gave rise. Thus it will be seen that the author deserves high credit for eliminating all that is extraneous and leaving his work characterized by utmost simplicity.

But it is in the comments, conclusions and generalizations regarding genetics that Dr. Weatherwax's originality is most striking; though it must be confessed they have a generic resemblance to those of other morphologists who have invaded the field. His first conclusion is that since waxy maize gives a red color with the iodine solution, its endosperm is composed wholly of erythro-dextrin, a rare carbohydrate having the unique property of producing this color reaction. Generously, though perhaps unnecessarily, he cites as corroborating authority for these facts a paper by Meyer written in 1886. Doubtless because chemical literature is notoriously erroneous, he has been able to dispense with the relatively large literature on the subject, much of which has been brought together by Abder-

[1] Weatherwax, Paul. A rare carbohydrate in waxy maize. *Genetics*, 7, 568-572, 1923.